

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:[::]  
determining, prior to conducting an auction, a maximum and minimum volume to be awarded, from a total volume, to a leading successful bidder in the auction;  
conducting the auction using a processor; and  
after the auction has been conducted, awarding to the highest ranked bidder in the auction an amount equal to the minimum volume and an additional volume, up to the maximum volume, based on a factor that is related to a difference between a first ranked bid and a second ranked bid; and  
awarding to a second ranked bidder a portion of the total volume.
2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the amount to be allocated to a bidder having a certain rank after conducting the auction is the same regardless of which bidder attains that rank.
3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the amount to be allocated to a bidder having a certain rank after conducting the auction varies dependent on which bidder attains that rank.
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the total volume is a volume of goods.
11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the total volume is a volume of services.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying market feedback to at least one bidder while conducting the auction.
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the market feedback includes a volume allocated to a given bidder.
15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the volume to be allocated to the given bidder is provided only to the given bidder during the auction.
16. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the volume to be allocated to the given bidder is provided to a further bidder during the auction.
17. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the market feedback includes a rank of the at least one bidder.
18. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the bidders are electronically coupled to an auction coordinator during the conducting of the auction.
19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the bidders submit bids to an auction coordinator online during the conducting of the auction.
20. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the auction is a reverse auction.
21. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the auction is a forward auction.
22. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising soliciting potential bidders.
23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein soliciting potential bidders includes:  
preparing a request for quotation;  
providing the request for quotation to potential bidders; and  
requesting that potential bidders respond to the request for quotation.
24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein said request for quotation includes an identification of goods to be purchased.
25. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein said request for quotation includes an identification of services to be purchased.
26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the minimum volume is expressed as a percent of the total volume.
27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the minimum volume is expressed as a quantity.
28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the quantity is a quantity of units.

29. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the quantity is a monetary value.
30. (Cancelled)
31. (Cancelled)
32. (Cancelled)
33. (Cancelled)
34. (Cancelled)
35. (Cancelled)
36. (Cancelled)
37. (Currently amended) A system, comprising:  
a sponsor processor configured to communicate with a first bidder processor and a second bidder processor;  
a memory coupled with the processor and configured to store ~~wherein~~ instructions which, when executed by said processor, cause said processor to:  
determine, prior to conducting an auction, a maximum and minimum volume to be awarded, from a total volume, to a leading successful bidder in an auction;  
conduct the auction; and  
after the auction has been conducted, award to the highest ranked bidder in the auction an amount equal to the minimum volume and an additional volume, up to the maximum volume, based on a factor that is related to a difference between a first ranked bid and a second ranked bid; and  
award to the second ranked bidder a portion of the total volume.
38. (Original) The system of claim 37, wherein said first bidder processor and said second bidder processor communicate through an auction coordinator.
39. (Original) The system of claim 37, wherein said first bidder processor and said second bidder processor communicate through the Internet.
40. (Previously presented) A computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions, wherein the instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:  
determine, prior to conducting an auction, a maximum and minimum volume to be awarded, from a total volume, to a leading successful bidder in the auction;  
conduct the auction; and

after the auction has been conducted, award to the highest ranked bidder in the auction an amount equal to the minimum volume and an additional volume, up to the maximum volume, based on a factor that is related to a difference between a first ranked bid and a second ranked bid; and

award to the second ranked bidder a portion of the total volume.

41. (Cancelled)